Birmingham Society for Conſtitutional Information.

55 b. 31
T 36

Committee Room, March 4, 1793.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY,

THAT this Society do addreſs the Workmen of every Manufactory in this Town and Neighbourhood, and requeſt their united Aſſiſtance and Concurrence, by ſigning their Names to a Petition for obtaining a more equal Repreſentation in the Commons Houſe of Parliament.

To the Journeymen Workmen employed by Mr. Johnson

BROTHERS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS,

WE beg leave to addreſs you as a worthy and uſeful body of men, well knowing that by the nature and ancient purity of our Conſtitution, which is founded on the Liberty of the People, you have *rights equal to all*; for it is the birth-right of Engliſhmen to be equal in national rights—but by reaſon of Borough Property, and the paſſing of the Triennial Act, in 1694 (that is, making Parliaments continue *three years*, without being ſubject to the control of the people) together with the paſſing of the Septennial Act, in 1715, which extended the duration of Parliaments to *ſeven years*, you have been deprived of the moſt valuable privileges of Engliſhmen.

It was enacted in the reign of Edward III. ſtat. 4, c. 14, "that a Parliament ſhould be holden every year once, or oftener if need be;" but by reaſon of the venal and corrupt mode of elections, and the preſent unequal repreſentation, the people of Great Britain, and particularly the working part of the nation, are very grievouſly oppreſſed, by an enormous public debt of *Two Hundred and Seventy Millions*, beſides a dreadful catalogue of Taxes, &c. of which Seventeen Millions are yearly paid into the Exchequer, Three Millions Seven Hundred Thouſand Pounds paid to the Cuſtom-houſe Officers and other Collectors, nearly Three Millions paid in conſequence of the Poor's Laws, and Five Millions in Tithes; to the above may be added the CORN BILL, which heightens the calamities of the People, and is evidently deſigned to raiſe the property of the landed lords of the earth at the expence of your labour.

All theſe dreadful cauſes, operating upon you, are the very reaſons for the dearneſs of the neceſſaries of life—for determined are they to make you pay the Taxes, &c. if you and your dear offſpring are determined to live; and how far the preſent war may haſten your ruin, as a people thought to be free, Heaven only knows! as the war now carrying on is againſt principles only, and, in our opinion, is evidently deſigned to take away the ſmall remains of our freedom.

To do away the above corrupt and unjuſt meaſures, and to deliver ourſelves and poſterity from the calamities of a war, are the grand reaſons why this Society calls upon you, as forming a great part of the trading intereſt of this nation, to take theſe things into your ſerious conſideration, and be determined to think, to ſpeak, and to act for yourſelves; and we requeſt you to lend this Society your aid and aſſiſtance, by ſigning your names to a Petition to be ſent to the Honorable Houſe of Commons, praying for an equal repreſentation of the people, whereby you may regain your long loſt rights, and reſtore to yourſelves and poſterity the ancient privilege of conſtantly, uniformly, and uninterruptedly, ſpeaking their ſentiments.

Therefore, brother citizens, be not deprived of your rights by thoſe who pretend you have no power; look at your own importance, view your own dignity as men—ſpeak, and it is done. By your united good-will, and unanimity with your brethren of this great nation, and your determination to behave orderly and peaceably, you will make yourſelves ſtronger and more honourable than the powers that vainly ſtruggle againſt you.

It is then to be hoped that you will rouſe yourſelves from that ſtate of indolence, in which you have been lulled by the baſe inſinuations of mercenary and intereſted Placemen; and ſeek the advantages to be gained by yourſelves and poſterity. And may God grant us, our nation and people, a happy iſſue!

55. b. 12. (26)

Signed by order, and in the name of the Society,

J. HARRISON, PRESIDENT.